

Message Text

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTIONS

1-PANAMA CITY--CRITICISM OF DECONCINI RESERVATION CONTINUES IN
APRIL 13 MEDIA, ESPECIALLY IN PRO-GOP MATUTINO. CRITICA, LA
ESTRELLA AND CHANNEL 2 TELEVISION ALSO CARRY CRITICAL COMMENTARIES.

2-ALL MORNINGS FRONT PAGE U.S. CATHOLIC CONFERENCE STATEMENT
ON TREATIES ISSUED APRIL 11, AND OPEN LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR
GEN. TORRIJOS ISSUED BY LOCAL CATHOLIC PRIESTS. ESTRELLA AND
STAR AND HERALD FRONT PAGE AP ITEMS ON CANCELATION OF CARTER-
DECONCINI MEETING APRIL 12, AND DPA STORY QUOTING BYRD AND BAKER
AS PREDICTING CLOSE, BUT SUCCESSFUL, VOTE ON SECOND TREATY.
ESTRELLA ALSO FRONT PAGES DPA STORY ON COMMENTS BY PANAMANIAN
JURISTS AND EX-FONMIN BODY THAT DECONCINI RESERVATION FUNDAMENTALLY
CHANGES NEUTRALITY TREATY TERMS.

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3-CRTICA EDITS CONTINUE TO TAKE MODERATE TONE, QUOTING TORRIJOS
LETTER TO UN MEMBERS AND COMMENTING ONLY IN FINAL PARAGRAPH
THAT "JIMMY CARTER HAD BETTER ARRANGE THE PROBLEM IF HE CAN,
BECAUSE THE PANAMANIAN PEOPLE IN ANOTHER PLEBISCITE WILL STAND
UP AGAINST THEIR DECISION OF OCTOBER 23."

4-MATUTINO EDIT EMPHASIZES PANAMANIAN SOLIDARITY AGAINST

RESERVATION, POINTING OUT DIVERSITY OF OPINION BEFORE AND AFTER PLEBISCITE, BUT CONTINUING, "IT WAS ONLY NECESSARY FOR THE SHADOW OF A MENACE AGAINST...THE PANAMANIAN ACHIEVEMENT OF FULL SOVEREIGNTY OVER ALL ITS TERRITORY...TO APPEAR IN THE PANORAMA OF RATIFICATION AND THE SENATE DELIBERATIONS...FOR ALL PANAMANIAN TO FEEL UNITED...THAT WHICH HAS BEEN ATTEMPTED AGAINST OUR NATION HAS UNIFIED US...ONE FOR ALL AND ALL FOR ONE...AND THAT ONE IS PANAMA."

5-MATUTINO COLUMN BITACORA DE LA REDACCION TAKES ATTITUDE THAT IN FACE OF PRESSURES FROM U.S. ON TREATY, PANAMA SHOULD "RE STUDY OUR FOREIGN POLICY AND OUR ECONOMIC POLICIES AS WELL..." DESPITE GRAVE RISKS THIS MIGHT BRING, BECAUSE "IT IS EVIDENT THAT WE CANNOT CROSS OUR ARMS AND MAINTAIN OUR PATRIOTIC DIGNITY...WE RECOGNIZE THAT IN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WHICH LATIN AMERICA IS LIVING THROUGH...WE ARE MAINTAINED BY AN UMBILICAL CORD TO FOREIGN INTERESTS, ESPECIALLY THE U.S...BUT IN THE FACE OF A SITUATION IN WHICH IT IS EVIDENT THAT OUR NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE AND LIBERATION ARE AT STAKE, NOTHING SHOULD PREVENT US FROM USING OUR SACRED RIGHT OF AUTODETERMINATION... LET'S LOOK FOR OTHER SOURCES OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND NOT FOLLOW BLINDLY IN ONE DIRECTION, WHICH IS NOT COMPATIBLE WITH OUR PATRIOTIC WISHES."

6-SEN. DECONCINI HIMSELF COMES IN FOR CRITICISM FOR REY BARRIA, WRITING IN MATUTINO, AND FROM ESTRELLA EDIT. BARRIA ARTICLE UNCLASSIFIED

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CALLS DECONCINI "SON OF THE BIG STICK," AND SAYS HE IS IN LEAGUE WITH OTHER BITTER ENEMIES OF PANAMA, SUCH AS REAGAN, DOLE, GOLDWATER AND THOMPSON. THESE MEN HAVE INHERITED IMPERIALIST ATTITUDE OF BIG STICK DIPLOMACY, ACCORDING TO BARRIA, AND HAVE SUPPORT OF "OLD POLITICAL PARTIES OF THE PANAMANIAN OLIGARCHY...IT IS NOT BY CHANCE THAT CERTAIN STUDENT GROUPS OF THE SO-CALLED PANAMANIAN ULTRALEFT HAVE CENTERED THEIR ATTACK ON THE TREATIES APPROVED BY NATIONAL PLEBISCITE AND ON GEN. TORRIJOS' GOVERNMENT, THUS LOSING FOCUS ON THE TRUE ENEMIES OF THE PANAMANIAN PEOPLE: THE OLIGARCHY AND IMPERIALISM."

7-ESTRELLA EDIT ACCUSES DECONCINI AS UNKNOWN SENATOR FROM UNKNOWN STATE, OF SEEKING PUBLICITY THROUGH HIS RESERVATION TO TREATY, BUT "IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN IF SO MUCH NOTORIETY DOES NOT BECOME VERY NEGATIVE." EDIT COMMENTS ON SURPRISE SHOWN BY ADMINISTRATION AND SENATE AT NEGATIVE REACTION TO DECONCINI RESERVATION, "NOT ONLY IN PANAMA, WHERE IT WAS LOGICAL, BUT ALSO IN THE MOST RESPECTABLE, RESPONSIBLE AND SERIOUS MEDIA IN THE U.S.... NEITHER PANAMA NOR ANY OTHER NATION IN THE WORLD COULD VOLUNTARILY ACCEPT FOREIGN INTERVENTION IN ITS INTERNAL AFFAIRS."

8-ESTRELLA BELIEVES THAT "THERE IS YET TIME FOR THE SENATE TO

BACK UP, TO AMEND ITS ERROR, TO SAVE THE TREATIES AND THE NATION'S PRESTIGE, AND TO DEMONSTRATE THAT THE INTERVENTIONIST POLICIES OF THE U.S. ARE SOMETHING OF THE DEFINITELY CANCELED PAST. ON THE OTHER HAND, IF THE TREATIES REMAIN AS THEY ARE, THUS FRUSTRATING SO MANY YEARS OF NEGOTIATION NO ONE IN THIS WORLD, NO ONE, WILL ACCUSE PANAMA OF INTRANSIGENCE FOR REFUSING TO ACCEPT THE UNACCEPTABLE. THE ACCUSATION WILL HAVE ANOTHER TARGET.AND PROBABLY SEN. DECONCINI WILL HAVE A LONG TIME TO REPENT THE UNHAPPY INCIDENT."

9-LEFTIST STUDENT GROUP CIRCULO CAMILO TORRES ISSUES STATEMENT, PRINTED IN MATUTINO, INSISTING THAT A NEW PLEBISCITE IS NEEDED IF EVEN "ONE COMMA IS ADDED" TO TREATY. THIS INCLUDES, ACCORDING TO GROUP, LEADERSHIP AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE IV, OF NEUTRALITY TREATY WHICH IS STATEMENT'S FOCUS, RATHER THAN DECONCINI RESERVATION, UNCLASSIFIED

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ALTHOUGH GROUP PROMISES FURTHER STATEMENTS IN FUTURE ON OTHER ASPECTS OF TREATIES.

10-"HOW CAN THE U.S. DEFEND THE CANAL IN CASE OF AGRESSION OR THREAT, ACTING UNILATERALLY," ASKS TORRES GROUP, "WITHOUT AFFECTING THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AND INDEPENDENCE OF PANAMA?...THE CIRCULO CAMILO TORRES EXHORTS ALL PANAMANIAN TO FORCEFULLY REPUDIATE THIS AMENDMENT WHICH CONCEDES THE UNILATERAL RIGHT IN PERPETUITY OF U.S. INTERVENTION IN PANAMA."

11-MARIO VELASQUEZ TV 2 COMMENTARY EVENING OF APRIL 12 SHARPLY CRITICIZED PRES. CARTER FOR LACK OF LEADERSHIP. VELASQUEZ CITED "THE POLITICAL WEAKNESS OF CARTER AND HIS APPARENT INABILITY TO FULLY USE THE RESOURCES OF THE U.S. PRESIDENCY" TO ACHIEVE TREATY RATIFICATION WITHOUT DECONCINI RESERVATION. "UNDER OTHER PRESIDENTS," CONCLUDED VELASQUEZ, "SUCH AS LYNDON JOHNSON, WHO WAS A MASTER AT MANAGING THE CONGRESS, OR RICHARD NIXON WHO USED PRESIDENTIAL POWER WITH IMPERIALISTIC OVERTONES, PERHAPS THE WHITE HOUSE WOULD NOT HAVE HAD TO PAY FOR THE DECONCINI VOTE THE PRICE CARTER HAD TO PAY FACED WITH THE DEFEAT OF THE NEUTRALITY TREATY." ITEM JORDEN

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